1: Lowie E-5 (1926) 1939 NT20 Washo NT20

particular seasons when certain kinds of fish should be taken and when certain game should be hunted; and all hunting and fishing parties consulted him before starting out." As my data have it, the "rabbit chief" is distinct from the organizer of the deer hunt and, most emphatically, from the antelope charmer. Jack said a "rabbit boss" (pɛ'T'ɛ.u tɛ.upe"yu) possibly inherited his office from his father, whereas Dave made him a people's appointee.

Dave described the rabbit hunt as follows: The rabbit chief, who was not identical with the political headman, set the time for the drive. People met with bows and arrows. Possibly 15 men had nets, which they united into an enclosure about 200 yards long and 4 feet in height, held by sticks 6 or 7 feet apart." The line was straight except at the ends, where it was crooked. About 200 Washo, the "boss" among them, joined in the drive, scaring their quarry. An old man with a boy stayed at one end of the net, which Dave compared to the wire fence of a chicken coop. Some people shot the game with bow and arrow. The rabbits thought they were escaping and rushed into the net, where most of them were caught. The boy would get up and kill them with a stick. The drivers killed most of the rabbits, each possibly 3 or 4 apiece, with a total kill of 400 to 500 a day. On the following day the hunters went in another direction, perhaps 6 miles away. When heavily loaded, they went home. Rabbits, when caught, were hit on the head with a club. (Cf. Jack's statement below.) Finally the rabbit chief said, "We stop today, we have all we want today. Let us go home." Then they removed the hide and the women gutted the animals. The men tore the skin from the legs with their hands, then cut the hides into string. The string was wound around small straight willow sticks. String was twisted into one piece 14 feet long. After drying them for a day and a half, they would take them down. Twenty-five strings made one jack-rabbit blanket to cover two people. When first finished, they were 2½ inches thick and so warm that in winter the Indians would undress completely under such a covering.

A blanket lasted three years, but the hunt was held every fall, after October. The owner of an extra skin might sell it for a buckskin to a man who lacked a good jack-rabbit blanket. Whatever flesh was left over was hung up in the shade and dried. The Washo would boil jack-rabbit flesh and pine-nut soup at the same time, using willow baskets for the soup. Jack said that from 25 to 30 men with possibly 10 or 15 nets (ti"gɛc) engaged in a rabbit chase. Several nets were arranged in a circle and the rabbits were driven into them. They were not clubbed to death, but killed with bow and arrow.

Other species added to the food supply. Porcupine (sɛ"uwut) were eaten. Skunk (tupi"wi), one informant said, were never eaten; but Dave said they were once killed with smoke in a hole by his father-in-law, who boiled the flesh and liked it. The Washo boiled grasshoppers (pakɔ'tomu) in baskets, and also cooked locusts (tɛ"eak) in the ground and dried them. A long-legged insect called tɛ'lmu also served as food.

[*] Barrett gives the dimensions as some 300 feet and 24 to 30 inches, with a mesh about 3 inches square and stakes at 10-foot intervals.

[P.391, B]

the cloudless sky overhead.

Older white residents speak of Indian rainmakers, which is a source of much amusement among the Washo. Until a few years ago an Indian, who still lives in Dresslerville, used to take advantage of the gullibility or generosity of white ranchers by performing "rain dances" on their property in return for handouts of food. The Washo generally frowned on this, but because white men were the victims of the fraud it was considered harmless.

The father of the false rainmaker was a diviner of stolen articles. His method was to sit and smoke until the location of the desired article was revealed to him.

OBJECTS OF POWER

Eagle and magpie feathers were considered to be the most powerful items of a shaman's paraphernalia. Doctors are reported to have captured eagles and even to have tried to raise them to obtain feathers (223-231) The tail feathers were the most prized. Eagle feathers were extremely valuable and could be traded for anything including "a woman or a sack of pine-nut flour or anything worth a lot." Ideally the eagle was tied up until the shaman removed three tail feathers. The doctor then tied a string of beads to the bird's leg and released it as a messenger to the spirits. Description of eagle-down costumes suggest that birds were stripped of many more feathers than the ideal three. In historic times individuals have attempted to contain eagles. One old man in Woodfords is well known for having kept them on cradle-boards for easy transport, but such experiments usually ended in failure. Magpie feathers are considered less powerful than eagle feathers but still were highly prized. Today they are gathered by chance—taken from dead birds on the highway or picked up where they were shed.

In the past, eagle and magpie feathers were important parts of the dress of warriors. Magpie feathers were used to make a feather cap with a single feather suspended from the top. Informants recall their elders' describing eagle feathers' being suspended individually from the upper arms and thighs of particularly powerful warriors.

Modern peyotists have lost none of the traditional Washo feeling about these feathers. The ceremonial fans of road chiefs, believed the only persons capable of handling the immense power, are made of eagle feathers. Other peyotists favor the less powerful but nonetheless potent magpie feather (d'Azevedo and Merriam 1957).

Tobacco, as the foregoing accounts illustrate, played an important part in Washo shamanism. It appears to have been used as an offering to the spirits. In addition it is clear that it was felt to have special power of its own. Today older men smoke sparingly and are often somewhat embarrassed to be offered a cigarette casually during conversation. In prewhite times the tobacco was a native variety gathered and dried by the shaman. Today Bull Durham appears to have replaced the wild variety as "Indian" tobacco. The Indians seemed delighted to see me rolling a cigarette; they acted as if I were mastering what they felt was a particularly Indian art. Bull Durham is also important in peyote ceremonialism because it is "real Indian tobacco."

Incense cedar plays an important role in modern peyote meetings. It is dried and thrown into the fire to create a fragment smoke which is considered bene-

CHAPTER II

ECONOMY

Compared to more technologically advanced societies, the Washo had little processing, storage, or transportation of goods. It was a "direct economy" in that the producing group consumed most of its own products. Distances between the point of distribution and the point of consumption were usually not great.

Economic demands seldom exceeded subsistence requirements so that even when natural supplies were abundant accumulated surpluses were small. Surpluses in pinenuts are an exception to this, but since pinenuts were difficult to store for more than one year or to tranport in profitable quantities, this surplus was set aside for subsistence and not trade. If one family had a surplus in pinenuts there was a tendency for all families to have such a surplus. Therefore these were largely non-tradeable surpluses.[1]

Supply was determined by the productivity of the natural environment and the amount and skill of the human labor used in production and distribution. The part of wealth devoted to acquiring new goods and the social forms involved in production, distribution, and consumption played a minor role in supply.

Pinenuts (tagum), acorns (malung), and other seeds were among the major staple foods. A variety of roots, berries, and leafy plants filled out the rest of the vegetable diet. Animal fats and protein were provided primarily by fish and small mammals, especially rabbits. With the exception of deer (mɛ́mdewi), the large mammals, such as antelope (ayas), mountain goat (ogul), and bear (taba) were not important in the diet. They were sought as much for their skins and the prestige of killing them as for their meat. Downs (1961, 381) writes "all informants emphasized that Indians shared food equally. Thus a statement made voluntarily that bear meat was not shared suggests different attitudes about bears." And there are suggestions that "the killing of a bear represented the ultimate in Washo bravery and the possession of the skin conferred extra powers on the owner." Birds, reptiles, and insects were also eaten. Several hundred species of plants and animals were known and used by the Washo. Merriam (n.d.) collected names for over 200 plants and animals. Numerous plants were used as medicines (Train, et al. 1941; Murphey 1959).

Water (dime) was carried and stored in deer intestine bags and basketry water-jars. With the numerous streams and springs in Washo territory no place

1. See pp. 57-58 for a discussion of pinenut surpluses.

faster. After two or three years it may be given to an older person or traded off. If it is cleaned and repaired carefully and hung up in the summer over the lower limb of a tree with the warp vertical, it will last ten years or more

Lowie (1939, 327) wrote that in preparing a blanket "The men tore the skin from the legs with their hands, then cut the hides into strings. The string was wound around small straight willow sticks. String was twisted into one piece 14 feet long. After drying them a day and a half, they would take them down. Twenty five made one jack-rabbit blanket to cover two people. When first finished, they were 2 1/2 inches thick and so warm that in winter the Indians would undress completely under such a covering. A blanket lasted three years, but the hunt was held every fall, after October. The owner of an extra skin might sell it for a buckskin to a man who lacked a good jack-rabbit blanket."

A few comments on the above passage are warranted. My informants indicated that the skins were purposely not dried so they would remain flexible and easy to work with.[1] Also the exchange rate was about 20 rabbit skins for one untanned deer skin and not one for one. A completed rabbit skin blanket of 20 skins was worth about three untanned deer skins.

Rabbits to be used for blankets were gathered in the late fall or winter when their fur was thick. The skin was taken off and cut into a single strip a little over an inch wide and around 15 feet long. An obsidian knife (tagil) was held in the mouth while the skin was held by the hands. The skin was cut around on the outside, with the hind legs first, in a spiral by cutting and turning the skin.

From three to six skins of one strip apiece were sewn end to end with deer sinew (dideu) to form a long string. Roy James said that each rabbit skin string was tied in a loop from one end to the eye holes. Two of the long strings (or several attached looped strings) were then twisted together with the palm of the hand on the thigh of one man while another man held the two strings tight several feet away. When twisted the strings were about an inch in diameter. The man who twisted the strings also wound up the strings on a stick (g¢liwisha tsuhua). The stick was pointed at one end to facilitate the removal of the twisted strings when the twisting and winding operation was complete.

The long two ply string when it was rolled up and tied with sinew for storage was called a t¢l¢lupa. A single t¢l¢lupa was stored in a damp place until other t¢l¢lupa were prepared and the blanket was ready to be made.

1. Cf., Dangberg n.d.

Trade

Trade and gift exchange were not clearly separate in Washo society. However, the language does distinguish between sharing (mibʔshigihi) and trading (damalu).[1] In trade there tended to be immediate reciprocation while gift exchange often involved a time lapse. Trade also tended to be competitive and to increase with less intensive social ties. Trade involved explicit negotiation and social status was secondary as a factor in the transaction. Trade involved an impersonal relation which focused on the economic goods rather than upon the social relations of persons involved.

Washo trade was an estimated one or two percent of the total distribution. Four types of trade are recognized: (1) silent, without face-to-face interaction; (2) personal, where personal ties are relatively important; (3) administered, based on governmental rules; and (4) market, which is relatively free from personal and governmental ties. Washo trade in this framework was "personal".

Hank Pete maintained that women would often trade under circumstances in which men would ordinarily give gifts. Trade proceeded with little haggling. The transaction was initiated by either a buyer or a seller. It took the form of propositions, questions, and answers such as "I'll trade you this for that. This one? No, that one! I need more for that one. Then I'll include this, too. We can trade then." Trade with non-Washo was conducted through gestures and a few key words understood by both parties, such as damalu for "trade".

The Washo lacked rigid standards of reference, that is, the valuation of two materials to be traded in terms of a third material. Goods were traded without reference to their value in other goods and without a traditional exchange rate. For this reason it was difficult to collect data on equivalencies of value or rates of exchange.

From descriptions of actual transactions, and by insisting on some relative values of objects, the following scale was established by this writer. Hank Pete said that rabbit nets were never traded. They were too valuable. Many things, because of tradition or personal desires, were not traded. Such things might be a shaman's paraphernalia, a bow that had killed a number of deer, or food and clothing needed for survival. Freed and Freed (n.d., 10) state that the loss or destruction of a shaman's curing implements was a cause of illness to the shaman.

Certain things were near the top of the value scale. A double rabbit skin blanket, a large coiled water tight cooking basket (giuleu), a whole buck deer, and three tanned deer skins were roughly equal in value. Hank Pete said he had never heard of anyone who had three tanned deer skins, and a

1. A loan word from Miwok, according to William H. Jacobsen, Jr. (personal communication).